

the Republicans have their education tax plan, but it wouldn't help those going to our community colleges much.

Democrats have a fairer plan for capital gains cuts—the Republican plan now means that for wealthy investors, they will pay a lower effective rate on the profits of the sale of their stocks than a moderate income family pays on their wages. Democrats would allow those who are forced to sell their home at a loss some tax relief—the Republicans don't. Democrats target a fairer capital gains cut for small businesses and farmers. Our estate tax relief is aimed at giving families who want to pass on their small businesses a break rather than the well off who don't really need these kinds of tax cuts.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the American people to draw the line in the sand. It is time for the working families out there to be heard. It is time to stand up and be counted. Who does this House of the People stand for? There is nothing more basic than taxes and the difference between the Republicans tax package and the Democratic tax package is plain for Americans to see. It is time to stand up and really be counted.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. OWENS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAYNE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. PAYNE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

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OPPOSITION TO THE TAX AND SPENDING PORTIONS OF THE RECONCILIATION BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIAHRT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida [Mrs. MEEK] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I oppose both the tax provisions and the spending provisions of the reconciliation bill. I want to say why, Mr. Speaker.

The spending cuts that the House approved today fall mainly on the weakest members of our society, on the sick and on the elderly. Tomorrow we will be voting on tax cuts that mainly favor the wealthy. Today the House voted to rob from the poor so that tomorrow the majority can help the rich.

I think that is wrong, Mr. Speaker, and I oppose both parts of this strategy.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the poorest 20 percent of families, those with an average annual income of only \$9,200 will get \$63 less because of the majority cuts in Federal spending and changes

in taxes. Think of this, Mr. Speaker. The wealthiest 1 percent of the families, those with an average annual income of \$442,000 come out as big winners. They will have \$27,000 more. That means that the extra money they get under this majority bill exceeds the total income of the poorest in this Nation.

I represent many of those people, Mr. Speaker. I seek an appeal to the Congress to look at this bill that has these tax cuts that will not help the poorest of the poor.

The majority here in the House wants to pay for these unfair tax cuts by squeezing large public hospitals like my public hospital in Miami, Jackson Memorial. It helps the poor and that is probably one of the few hospitals that must take the poor.

The Republican majority cuts the Medicare payments to hospitals by \$38 billion over 5 years. The reported bill, Mr. Speaker, is one that will certainly rob from the poor. I think that it is wrong, and certainly I oppose this strategy because it does fall on the weakest members of our society. It also cuts for hospitals like my public hospital the disproportionate share payment to hospitals like Jackson Memorial by another 13 billion over 5 years.

You know who is going to take up that cost? The taxpayers, the middle income, the upper income, the poor; someone has to pay that share that no longer will the government assist in sharing enough to help hospitals like Jackson. That is a \$51 billion hit on these kinds of hospitals.

These hospitals treat the poorest in our communities. It is the poor who would end up getting less health care.

Yesterday I tried to improve on part of the reconciliation bill by asking the Committee on Rules to make in order my bipartisan amendment to give supplemental security, which we call SSI, the Supplemental Security Income, and the Medicaid to 147,000 legal immigrants who have been living in this country who were in the country last August, but they are not covered by the reported Ways and Means proposal.

You know who is going to have to take care of them and give them the health care? You are, Mr. Speaker, and I and those of us who are able to pay for that because, if you were not poor or elderly or disabled when this bill passed last year, then you are still in this country, and now when you get to be 64 years old and you become disabled and elderly, you are not covered.

I offer this amendment with my dear colleague from Florida [Ms. ROSLEHTINEN] and we also offer a way to pay for this, Mr. Speaker, for these needy people, but the Committee on Rules refused to let the House vote on our bipartisan way of improving the bill.

Mr. Speaker, we all would like to cut taxes. We know that the time has come that we can no longer spend where there are no resources. We understand

that. We know that this is a time of belt tightening. We know that this is a time, as we go into the year 2000, that we must balance the budget. Well, you have decided to do that; the budget agreement has been cut. But this is not the time, not when we are asking the poor and the elderly to pay for the tax cuts.

There is a fair way to cut taxes, but the way of the leadership is the wrong way. It worsens the spread between our wealthiest citizens and our poorest citizens. No one is here to say that poor and middle class people are not supposed to pay taxes, but I am saying that if there is a gap, it should be one that is equitable and that the rich will pay their share as well as the middle income and the poor.

TAX CUTS SHOULD BE FAIR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. SNYDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the staff for putting in yet another late evening here on behalf of the people of America.

Mr. Speaker, I support a balanced budget. I strongly support it and all the things it can do for the business climate in this country. I voted for the budget deal and was one of the two-thirds of the Democratic side that did vote for the budget deal for a balanced budget, and as we know here that includes a tax cut over the next 5 years totaling \$135 billion.

Tomorrow we are going to make a choice about what type of tax cut we want, what type of tax cut do we think America would benefit from. And Mr. Speaker, I consider this to be the good side of partisanship, that there is going to be a choice we make tomorrow between the Republican plan and Democratic plan; and we are in the minority party, but we have an alternative that we think is better.

For me the issue comes down to what is the best tax cut plan for Arkansas. That is where I am from. What is going to be best for the working middle class families of Arkansas, for farmers, for self-employed, for the small business folks of Arkansas, for those American who play by the rules, work hard and pay taxes? Let me deal first, Mr. Speaker, with the child tax credit.

I am going to protect last names here, but this is Judy and her two lovely children, constituents of mine in central Arkansas. Judy makes \$7.50 an hour. That works out to a total of \$15,000 a year.

Now under the Republican plan because she qualifies for the earned income tax credit, a credit that has been supported by every President including Ronald Reagan since Ronald Reagan; because she takes advantage of that earned income tax credit, under the Republican plan, she will not qualify for the \$300 or \$500 per child tax credit.

Now the argument we hear is that, well, she does not pay income tax, that

she does not pay income tax. Yes, she pays payroll taxes, but that does not count. I have a copy of her payroll stub. You know this is what we get every week or month, Mr. Speaker, and we look on here and we kind of get that empty feeling in our belly when we see how much taxes came out of it.

Yes, she pays income tax, but she also pays the payroll tax. And here is what she pays for her Medicare and her Social Security, the FICA tax, the payroll tax, that all employers and all working people in America pay.

Please do not tell her that she does not pay taxes. But because of the way the Republican plan is written, even though she has two children and pays \$1,150 a year in payroll taxes, even though she pays that level of taxes, she does not qualify under the Republican bill for a per child tax credit even though she has those two lovely children. She plays by the rules, she pays her taxes. Some reward, Mr. Speaker, for being a good American.

Let me show you another picture. This is another family that are constituents of mine. This is Judy and her two children. Her children are older. She is to the point now she better be thinking about college, and I know Judy well enough to know that she is. She makes approximately \$31,000 a year and she will qualify because of her income for the per child tax credit. But let us talk about the college aspect of it.

Under the Democratic plan she will be able to get \$1,500, when the full credit kicks in, per child per year for her children's college for the first 2 years. But under the Republican plan she will also get \$1,500 per child but it will be calculated differently. It will be calculated 50 percent of the first \$3,000 of tuition and expenses. It sounds the same; does it not? They are both going to get \$1,500. But it is not the same for Arkansas.

Pulaski Technical College in North Little Rock, the tuition is a thousand dollars, a little over a thousand dollars a year. For Foothills Technical Institute in White County, Arkansas, gods county, Mr. Speaker, if you are looking for a place to move, the total tuition per year is \$672 a year. You take 50 percent of that, if you go to Foothills Technical, you will get about \$350 tax credit, not the \$1,500.

It is just wrong under that Republican bill to tell folks if you go to an expensive school, you get the full \$1,500. If you choose to go to a 2-year community college or school like Foothills Technical Institute, you do not get the full credit even though your tuition is under \$1,500.

Judy works hard, she plays by the rules, she pays taxes; she does much better under the Democratic bill, not the Republican alternative.

And finally today, Mr. Speaker, I had these letters delivered to my office from farmers throughout Arkansas, my district, and they are concerned, every one of them, about the estate tax.

Every one of them is either handwritten or hand typed.

Folks say: Well, estate tax just favors the rich. If you are a small business person or a farmer, you are very concerned about that having to be broken up when you pass away. Under the Democratic plan the relief is immediate. Under the Republican plan the relief is delayed until the year 2007.

TAXPAYER RELIEF ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to address one of the most important votes we will cast in the 105th Congress, and that is the tax cut bill. I strongly oppose the Taxpayer Relief Act which we will vote on tomorrow. I do so not because I am opposed to tax cuts. As a former chairwoman of revenue and taxation in the California State legislature, I am for tax cuts. But I am opposed to this relief bill which is not fair.

As the charts behind me demonstrate, the bulk of the tax relief is offered for the wealthiest taxpayers while the low and middle income taxpayers, the ones who live in California's 37th Congressional District, the district I represent, receive only nominal relief.

Mr. Speaker, 56 percent of the Republican tax cut plan will go to the wealthiest 5 percent of Americans, Americans who earn well over \$200,000. Under the Republican plan, taxpayers who earn \$26,900 to \$44,500 will receive only 17.3 percent of the tax cuts. Moreover, for the lowest income earners, those who earn \$6,600 to \$15,900, the Republican tax cut plan amounts to what is in effect a tax hike.

This is not tax relief, but rather a tax ripoff for millions of hard-working middle class and lower income earning citizens. To provide such a tremendous tax cut to the wealthiest citizens of this country and at the same time increase taxes on American citizens who are earning the lowest income and are in the most need of a tax relief does not make any sense.

The Republican tax bill further denies the \$500 child tax credit to 20 million working families who receive the earned income tax credit. This plan does not value their hard work even though their earnings place them at or barely above the rate of poverty, and this is earned income. They deserve the child tax credit as much as any other working family.

The Democratic alternative tax cut plan is the only real tax cut plan. It ensures that all Americans who receive tax relief receive tax relief and not just the wealthiest. Those middle class hard-working American citizens who need a tax cut, those who earn \$26,900 to \$44,500 will receive 58.4 percent of the tax relief under the Democratic

plan. In effect the Democratic alternative shifts the bulk of the tax relief from the top 5 percent to the middle 40 percent of all American taxpayers.

The Democratic alternative tax cut plan also provides an estimated \$37 billion in education tax credits, which is almost twice what is offered in the Republican plan. It includes \$5.7 billion in homeowner tax credits and important tax relief for small businesses, farmers, and for families with children.

I do urge my colleagues to think about the American people we were elected to serve, to think about the millions of hard-working parents, trying to provide more than the basic needs of food, shelter and clothing for their children, but also a quality education, a healthy and safe environment to grow up in, and most important of all, Mr. Speaker, a quality future.

We must represent the American people and vote for a real tax cut plan that will help all American families.

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HISTORIC VOTE AGAINST OUR VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIAHRT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. TAYLOR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow in Congress Democrats and Republicans alike will vote for a tax reduction. They are going to give the wealthiest contributors a big tax break. They are going to give the smaller contributors a smaller tax break. But when it comes to those who in my opinion contributed the most to our country, not with their wallets, but with their lives and with their blood, they are going to get nothing at all.

I am talking about our Nation's veterans and in particular, our Nation's military retirees. Mr. Speaker, today, your Congress had the opportunity to fulfill the promise of free health care for life for our Nation's military retirees, a promise that has been broken, a promise that remains broken every day.

Mr. Speaker, out of this entire year-long legislative session, today was the only day, according to the Parliamentarian, that legislation to restore to our Nation's military retirees the health care benefits that they were promised could be brought to the floor for a vote, and today I tried to do just that.

I am pleased to tell my colleagues that every single Democratic Member of Congress voted to help our Nation's military retirees, every single one. I regret to inform my colleagues that every single Republican Member of Congress, let me repeat this; every single Republican Member of Congress voted against helping our Nation's military retirees, even though the bill that would have helped them was introduced by a Republican, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. HEFLEY].